

Message Text

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ACTION OPR-02

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FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO AMCONSUL STUTTGART

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4323

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0042

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AEMR

SUBJECT: FLAG FOCUS ONE: CRITIQUE

REF: STUTTGART 1628

1. ASMARA PARTICIPANT FSO WAUCHOPE OFFERS THE FOLLOWING CRITIQUE OF E&E EXERCISE FLAG FOCUS ONE, JAN. 9-13, 1977: OVERALL THE EXERCISE WAS EXCELLENT AND A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE THE REQUIREMENTS ON A POST IN AN EVACUATION SITUATION. FURTHER IT GAVE THE STATE PARTICIPANTS A UNIQUE INSIGHT INTO THE U.S. MILITARY FUNCTION IN SUCH A SITUATION.

2. THERE ARE SEVERAL OBSERVATIONS WHICH MAY ASSIST IN IMPROVING THIS EXERCISE FOR THE NEXT GROUP OF PARTICIPANTS. THE PRINCIPAL DRAWBACK TO THE CPX WAS A QUESTION OF PACING. THE PARTICIPATING ROLE PLAYERS "PEAKED" BY THE MID-AFTERNOON OF THE FIRST DAY AND THE SECOND DAY DRAGGED APPRECIABLY AT A TIME WHEN THE EXERCISE SITUATION WOULD BE BUILDING TO A CLIMAX. THIS WAS A RESULT OF THE CONTROL ELEMENT HAVING THOROUGHLY PREPARED THE INITIAL ASPECTS OF THE EXERCISE, AND THEN BEING COMPELLED TO SLOW DOWN IN ORDER TO REACT TO THE PARTICIPANTS ACTIONS. THIS PACING PROBLEM COULD BE RECTIFIED BY BUILDING THE EXERCISE SITUATION MORE
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SLOWLY AND INTERJECTING VARIOUS CONTINGENCY INPUTS DURING THE SECOND DAY OF THE CPX. SUCH CONTINGENCIES WOULD ADD DIMENSION TO THE DEVELOPING SITUATION AND PERMIT THE PACE TO BE MAINTAINED, WHILE SIMULATING THE CONFUSION OF A REAL SITUATION. SUCH CONTINGENCIES COULD INCLUDE DUPLICATE MESSAGES FROM DIFFERENT ORIGINATORS, VACILLATING BYPLAY WITH THIRD COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES, AND ERRONEOUS REPORTS ON COLLAPSE OF THE LOCAL SITUATION.

3. ANOTHER IMPROVEMENT THAT MIGHT BE MADE IN THE CPX WOULD BE TO ALLOW THE EXERCISE OF GREATER JUDGMENT BY THE COUNTRY TEAM AS TO ESCALATION THROUGH THE VARIOUS PHASES. THE INPUTS FROM THE CONTROL GROUP WOULD BENEFIT FROM MORE SUBTLETY SO THAT THERE BE MORE LATITUDE FOR THE AMBASSADOR TO INVOKE A HIGHER PHASE.

4. AS ADVERSE WEATHER THWARTED THE MAJOR PART OF THE FTX, IT IS DIFFICULT TO OFFER MUCH IN TERMS OF CRITIQUE. DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFICERS AND STAFF OF THE AMPHIBIOUS TASK FORCE WAS BENEFICIAL FOR THE STATE PARTICIPANTS TO LEARN OF SIXTH FLEET CAPABILITIES AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES. LIKEWISE, THESE OFFICERS BENEFITED FROM THE STATE PARTICIPANTS OBSERVATIONS GLEANED FROM THEIR EXPERIENCE ON THE GROUND.

5. I RECOMMEND WITHOUT RESERVATION THAT THIS TYPE OF EXERCISE BE CONDUCTED ON AT LEAST AN ANNUAL BASIS FOR ALL POSTS WHICH COME UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SIXTH FLEET.
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